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Mining Monroe—Confessions of an Archivist

by Susan Smily, MA

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In addition to graduating from multiple Monroe programs, Susan Smily has been an Outreach Trainer and is a long-standing member of the Professional Association. She is the volunteer Professional Association Coordinator and Monroe's volunteer archivist. Susan is a teacher and speaker with more than 40 years' experience in the classroom and other presentation venues. She is a published author and poet, traveler and renaissance woman. Susan is committed to helping others reach their highest potential and she carries this objective into all facets of her life's work.

Something magical happens when you attend a Monroe program.

The Magic of Guidance

While I was in the middle of my Gateway in 1999, I received guidance that I had to share what I was experiencing, that I had to become an Outreach Trainer. Part of that process involved delving into research studies and anecdotal reports from people who had also felt the magic.

The Magic of Studies, Anecdotes and Reports

As today, in the early days of the Monroe Institute, some of those people were educators, doctors, engineers, psychologists. Many of them, like me, felt the desire to share what they had experienced and to use it to serve in some way. Many of them also wanted to help validate the amazing process that Robert A. Monroe had developed; they wanted to do experiments and studies in their fields of professional endeavor.

In 1980, Bob Monroe started the Professional Division to bring these people together to solicit their input and to offer them support. 20 years later it was their work that I was reading and sharing. Over 100 professional studies appeared in Monroe publications—"Breakthrough" between 1983 and 1989 and 100 in the "Hemi-Sync Journal" in the 90s.

At the same time scores of anecdotal reports were being sent in, detailing amazing results people were having in all aspects of life using the process and products being developed through the Monroe Institute.

In 2015, I realized that much of this amazing information was in limited publication journals, and even if a person wanted to see if there had been a study in a particular

area, if they didn't happen to have a copy of the relevant journal, there was no way to find it.

So, I volunteered to become the Monroe Institute archivist.

The Magic of Digital Publishing

The result was a compilation of every journal and newsletter published by the Monroe Institute between 1980 and 2013, when Monroe went digital, and made available on a flash drive. The drive also contains a searchable database of all the articles, with 22 categories and more than 150 sub-categories—over 600 files altogether.

That, however, turned out to be just the start.

The Magic of Hidden Files

In 2017, a cache of historic media came to light: audiotapes, DAT tapes, reel-to-reel, CDs, movies, DVDs.

Over 4,000 items in total.

One of the things that was truly exciting about this find was the nearly 2,000 tapes from the early Explorer project, and more than 250 tapes of Bob's talks at Gateway Voyage and Guidelines programs.

Once I had organized the many boxes and bins and created a spreadsheet index of everything, I set about digitizing the DAT tapes and audiotapes. Fortunately, I found a remarkable piece of equipment—a tape recorder/player that copies the analog tape directly onto a flash drive, which I could then copy into my computer files. With five of these machines working at once, I ultimately completed that task.

With assistance from a committed team of volunteers, I have been reviewing the Explorer session recordings with an eye (or, more accurately, an ear) to extracting and cataloging the meaningful content.

This year I began work on compiling the 150+ articles that have been published since the Institute publications went fully to digital in 2013.

Concurrently, we had been looking for the best means of preserving this record of the Institute's history, its 40-year record of exploration and discovery.

The Magic of the Internet Archives

I am now building the Monroe Institute Archives on the Internet Archives website. Our archives will ultimately contain photographic, audio and video collections, as well as all the journals and separate documents including some hand-written documents, once again cross-referenced by category. This means that anyone wishing to search the Monroe archives will be able to find everything in one location.

This is slow work—preparing each item for upload to ensure the descriptions and tags are correct, and then, of course, waiting while the Internet Archives does its thing.

But, as you may have already figured out, I'm a bit of a nerd when it comes to this work.

The Magic of Having the Front Row Seat

And I have the front row seat.

I'm finding reports and letters from the 70s and 80s. I am reviewing research studies from the 90s and reading letters from people who had amazing experiences with Monroe technology over the last 40 years. I'm listening to and watching Bob talk to first-night Gateway groups. I'm in the lab with Explorers as they connect with nonphysical intelligences that want to share their wisdom and insights.

Slowly but surely, this is all becoming available to everyone!

We'll let you know when the Monroe Archive site is ready for its grand opening.